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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/582,941	06/15/2006	Virginie Collomb	292163US6PCT	6544
22850	7590	05/21/2009	EXAMINER	
OBLON, SPIVAK, MCCLELLAND MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C. 1940 DUKE STREET ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314				PAYNE, SHARON E
ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER		
2875				
NOTIFICATION DATE			DELIVERY MODE	
05/21/2009			ELECTRONIC	

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Notice of the Office communication was sent electronically on above-indicated "Notification Date" to the following e-mail address(es):

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Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/582,941	COLLOMB ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	SHARON E. PAYNE	2875	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 05 March 2009.
- 2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 14-27 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 14-27 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) All b) Some * c) None of:
1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ . |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ . |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 14-22 and 26-27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Appleman (U.S. Patent 2,693,165) in view of Pollock et al. (U.S. Patent 5,913,414).

Regarding claim 14, Appleman discloses a handle mounted to pivot about an axis to actuate at least one electric switch unit (Figs. 1-3) and that is illuminated by a light source substantially disposed along the axis (30--the reflector is acting as a source of light), the handle including a cap forming a disk and a gripping tab that protrudes in a diametral plane (Fig. 1) and delimits a hollow internal space (Fig. 2); a light diffuser element (51) housed in the handle (Fig. 2), and that conducts the light originating from the light source from beneath an integrated mechanical base made of opaque material to the hollow internal space of the cap (Fig. 2); wherein the cap (50) is made of translucent or transparent material capable of allowing light to travel to the outside (Fig. 2), and wherein the cap forms a monoblock assembly with the integrated mechanical base and covers the integrated mechanical base (Fig. 2—see the cross section of the knob with the mechanical base).

Appleman does not disclose the diffuser element extending into the hollow space of the cap.

Pollock et al. discloses a light diffuser element (50) that extends into the hollow space of the cap (Fig. 1).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use the configuration of Pollock et al. in the apparatus of Appleman to create the desired decorative effect for an electric appliance.

Concerning claim 15, Appleman discloses the mechanical base is of generally annular shape (Figs. 2 and 3) and includes on its underside at least one actuation member interacting with a mechanism (Fig. 1)

Regarding claim 16, Appleman discloses the light diffuser element includes a light entrance face (Fig. 2, top), traverses the annular-shaped base via a central orifice aligned with the axis (Fig. 2, top), and includes a light emitter in the hollow internal space of the cap to diffuse the light to the sides (Fig. 2, middle--the reflector is a light emitter).

Concerning claim 17, Appleman discloses the light emitter housed in the hollow internal space of the cap is shaped like a prism and receives the light from a light entrance unit attached to the bottom of the handle (Fig. 2, reference number 30).

Regarding claim 18, Appleman discloses the light diffuser element is housed in the handle while being attached by interlocking or snap-fitting in a sealed manner to the handle (Fig. 2, top), the light emitter itself being housed in a sealed manner in the hollow internal space of the cap (Fig. 2, reflector is a light emitter).

Concerning claim 19, Appleman discloses wherein the handle further includes an angular position display pointer made of the same material as the integrated mechanical base and molded together therewith (Fig. 1).

Regarding claim 20, Appleman and Pollock et al. do not disclose the pointer being an "L" shape. Making the pointer in the shape of an "L" is considered to be an obvious variation. Since the pointer is well known in the art, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to make the pointer

in the shape of an "L", since changes in shape involve only routine skill in the art. See MPEP 2144.04.

Concerning claim 21, it consists of process limitations in an apparatus claim, which are not given patentable weight. See MPEP 2113.

Regarding claim 22, Appleman discloses the handle (Fig. 1--larger horizontal protrusions) being attached to a tubular rotary actuator (Fig. 2, top left) whose central bore allows the light beam originating from the light source to pass through (Fig. 2) and that is provided with a cam shape (42, Fig. 3) acting on at least one electric unit control cursor (column 2, lines 30-40). Appleman and Pollock et al. do not disclose a plurality of cam shapes.

Using a plurality of cam shapes is considered to be an obvious variation. Since the cam shape is well known in the art, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use a plurality of cam shapes to activate a plurality of switches, since duplicating parts only involves routine skill in the art. See MPEP 2144.04.

Concerning claim 26, Appleman and Pollock et al. do not specifically disclose the gripping tab as being colorless. Making the gripping tab colorless translucent or transparent material, the color of the light emitting by the source and transmitted to the gripping tab being correlated with that of the material of the mechanical base is considered to be an obvious variation, since changes of aesthetics involve only routine skill in the art. See MPEP 2144.04.

Regarding claim 27, Appleman discloses a handle mounted to pivot about an axis to actuate at least one electric switch unit (Figs. 1-3) and that is illuminated by a light source substantially disposed along the axis (30--the reflector is acting as a source of light), the handle

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including a cap forming a disk and a gripping tab that protrudes in a diametral plane (Fig. 1) and delimits a hollow internal space (Fig. 2); a light diffuser element (51) housed in the handle (Fig. 2), and that conducts the light originating from the light source from beneath an integrated mechanical base made of opaque material to the hollow internal space of the cap (Fig. 2); wherein the cap (50) is made of translucent or transparent material capable of allowing light to travel to the outside (Fig. 2), and wherein the cap covers the integrated mechanical base (Fig. 2) the mechanical base is of generally annular shape (Figs. 1-3) and includes on its underside at least one actuation member interacting with a mechanism (Figs. 1 and 2), wherein the handle further includes an angular position display pointer (see flat part with small point indicating the function, Fig. 1) made of the same material as the integrated mechanical base and molded together therewith (Figs. 1 and 2—see cross section in Fig. 2 to show that the material is the same).

Appleman does not disclose the diffuser element extending into the hollow space of the cap.

Pollock et al. discloses a light diffuser element (50) that extends into the hollow space of the cap (Fig. 1).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use the configuration of Pollock et al. in the apparatus of Appleman to create the desired decorative effect for an electric appliance.

3. Claim 23 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Appleman and Pollock et al. as applied to claim 22 above, and further in view of Demi (U.S. Patent 3,421,474).

Regarding claim 23, Appleman discloses the other end of the tubular portion having a cam shape (42) to move the cursors (column 2, lines 30-40). Appleman and Pollock et al. do not disclose a snap-fit tubular portion or a plurality of cam shapes. Demi discloses the tubular rotary actuator having a tubular portion that is snap-fitted close to one end onto a central collar of the handle (column 4, lines 3-16, and Fig. 2). Using a plurality of cam shapes is considered to be an obvious variation. Since the cam shape is well known in the art, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use a plurality of cam shapes to activate a plurality of switches, since duplicating parts only involves routine skill in the art. See MPEP 2144.04.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use the configuration of Demi in the apparatus of Appleman and Pollock et al. to simplify the assembly of the apparatus. See column 4, lines 3-16, of Demi.

4. Claims 24 and 25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Appleman in view of Pollock et al. as applied to claim 22 above, and further in view of Howie (U.S. Patent 5,845,365)

Regarding claim 24, Appleman and Pollock et al. do not disclose a bottom bowl in a flange. Howie discloses at a bottom a bowl made in a flange (Fig. 6), itself housing the handle (Fig. 6), and a seal including a lip pressing against the tubular actuator (Fig. 5, middle).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use the configuration of Howie in the apparatus of Appleman and Pollock et al. to seal the handle with the actuator.

Concerning claim 25, Appleman and Pollock et al. do not disclose a reinforcement. Howie discloses the seal is stiffened by a reinforcement (25).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use the configuration of Howie in the apparatus of Appleman and Pollock et al. to seal the handle with the actuator.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed 3/5/09 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Applicant argues that the amendments made to claim 14 mean that the light diffuser forms a monoblock with the base. However, the actual amendment means that the cap forms a monoblock with the base and not the diffuser. This element is shown in Fig. 2 of Appleman, because the cap is a different element than the diffuser.

Applicant also argues that the elements of claims 15 and 19 are not shown in Appleman and wrote claim 27 to reflect a combination of these elements. These elements are shown in Appleman, and the reasons are more clearly stated in the rejection of claim 27.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to SHARON E. PAYNE whose telephone number is (571)272-2379. The examiner can normally be reached on regular business hours.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Sandra O'Shea can be reached on (571) 272-2378. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Sharon E. Payne/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 2875